(c) As per India State of Forest Report, 2009, the total forest cover is 690.899 sq km, which is 21.02% of the total geographical area of the country.

Vehicular pollution

2641. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated amount of carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide etc. released to the atmosphere in the country duing each of the last three years due to vehicles;

(b) whether any prohibitive steps are proposed to be taken to protect the environment in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) The Energy Research Institute, New Delhi has released a report in the year 2009 which has data on pollutants released in the atmosphere due to vehicular pollution in the country. The estimated amount released in the year 2007 is 04.28, 02.02, 01.83 and 0.25 (all figures in million tonnes) for the parameters of Carbon Mono-oxide (CO), Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_X), Hydro-carbon (HC) and Particulate Matter (PM) respectively.

The Centre for Ecological Studies, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, in its report "Emission from India's Transport Sector" has estimated the amount of Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) released in the year 2003-04 to be 243.82 million tonnes.

(b) to (d) The prohibitive steps taken to protect the environment are as under:

(i) Bharat Stage (BS) III emission norms for passenger cars and BS II norms for two wheelers in ten metro cities, namely, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad/Secunderabad, Kanpur, Pune, Surat and Agra apart from National Capital Region are implemented since 01.04.2005.

(ii) BS IV emission norms for passenger cars and B.S. III for two wheelers in above 10 metro cities apart from National Capital Region have been notified with effect from 01.04.2010.

(iii) Stricter pollution under control (PUC) norms for in-use vehicles have been implemented with effect from 01.10.2004.

(iv) The emission standards for industries have been notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

(v) National Mission on Sustainable Habitat has been launched under the National Action Plan on Climate Change covering inter alia the transport sector.

(vi) Fuel quality in accordance with the roadmap of Auto Fuel Policy has been ensured across the country.

(vii) Mass rapid Transport System (MRTS) including Metro has been introduced in select metro cities in the country.

(viii) Infrastructure related to construction of flyovers, bridges and roads, to reduce congestion, has been augmented.

Protection of tigers

2642. SHRI BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken steps for protection of tigers;

(b) if so, what are the new tiger conservation measures proposed to be adopted;

(c) the States where such steps are being taken;

(d) the impact on the tiger population because of these measures during the last three years;

(e) whether Government proposes to set up special task force for tigers; and

(f) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (f) The milestone initiatives taken by the Government of India for protection of tigers and other wild animals are given in the Statement.

Statement

Milestone initiatives (including the recent) taken by the Government of India for protection of tigers and other wild animals

Legal steps

1. Amendment of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 for providing enabling provisions for constitution of the National Tiger Conservation Authority and the Tiger and Other Endangered Species Crime Control Bureau.

2. Enhancement of punishment in cases of offence relating to a tiger reserve or its core area.

Administrative steps

3. Strengthening of antipoaching activities, including special strategy for monsoon patrolling, by providing funding support to Tiger Reserve States, as proposed by them, for deployment of antipoaching squads involving ex-army personnel/ home guards, apart from workforce comprising of local people, in addition to strengthening of communication/wireless facilities.

4. Constitution of the National Tiger Conservation Authority with effect from 4.09.2006, for strengthening tiger conservation by, *inter-alia*, ensuring normative standards in tiger reserve